

REMARKS

The Official Action of July 20, 2004, has been carefully studied. The claims in the application are now claims 1, 2 and 4-15, and these claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance consistent with a voice mail message from Examiner Webman after informally considering claim 1 as amended above and claim 10 as amended above (but with one change explained below). Accordingly, favorable consideration and formal allowance are respectfully urged.

The claims as previously pending have all been rejected as obvious from various combinations of the prior art as set forth in detail in the Office Action of July 20, 2004. However, it is an unobvious aspect of the present invention that the soft capsule of the present invention exhibits excellent stability without containing beta-carotene and amino acids.

Consequently, applicants have amended their claims above to exclude any meaningful or effective amounts of beta-carotene and amino acids, and therefore applicants' claims should now be patentable.

During a telephone conference between Examiner Webman and applicants' undersigned attorney of record, Examiner Webman agreed to consider four (4) independent claims of various forms designed to exclude beta-carotene and amino acids. Applicants very much appreciate the examiner's willingness to do this. In a voice mail message to applicants' undersigned attorney of record, Examiner Webman indicated that he would be inclined to favorably consider two of the four proposed claims. Claim 1 as amended above corresponds precisely to one of these two "approved" claims, namely claim 1B. Claim 10 corresponds, with one change, to "approved" claim 1C; the change is that instead of reciting "titanium oxide", claim 10 recites white pigment. Claim 12 is retained in its previously presented form specifying that the white pigment is titanium oxide.

Claims 16 and 17 are now deleted above as unnecessary.

Based on applicants' understanding of the examiner's position as expressed in the aforementioned voice mail message, applicants believe that no further remarks are necessary, and that the present application should be in condition for formal allowance. However, if applicants have misunderstood and any problems remain, the favor of a

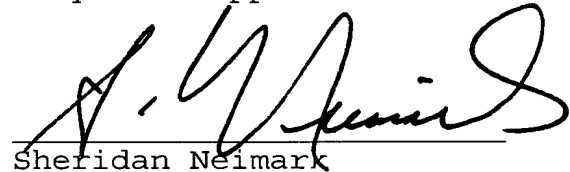
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telephone call from the examiner to applicants' undersigned  
attorney of record would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

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